

TRIBUTE TO THE INTERNATIONAL
COALITION FOR MISSING
ISRAELI SOLDIERS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the International Coalition for Missing Israeli Soldiers and its dedicated staff. Since its inception seven years ago, the Coalition has been the driving force behind the international grassroots campaign to return Israel's missing soldiers to their families. The Coalition's efforts, both in the United States and abroad, have jarred the conscience of the international community on behalf of American citizen Zachary Baumel and other missing Israeli soldiers. The single-minded dedication of this organization to assisting these soldiers, who were all but forgotten by the international community, has thrust the issue once again onto the international agenda.

In particular, Mr. Speaker, I want to note the successful lobbying efforts of the Coalition for legislation which I introduced in the Congress last year—H.R. 1175, "a bill to Locate and Secure the Release of Zachary Baumel, an American Citizen, and Other Israeli Soldiers Missing in Action." Some one hundred Members of the House joined as cosponsors of this legislation, and ultimately the bill passed with the unanimous support of both the House and Senate. It was signed into law by President Clinton last November. I took this action in order to raise the priority of this issue in American foreign policy and to facilitate a more concerted effort to bring closure on this matter after eighteen frustrating years.

Mr. Speaker, Israel is our closest ally in the region, and some years ago Israel played a major role in securing the release of American hostages being held in Lebanon. Now it is fitting that we repay this debt and take meaningful action on behalf of Israel's missing soldiers. Success in this endeavor can only strengthen American initiatives in the Middle East by creating an atmosphere that can make Middle East peace a reality.

On June 4th of this year, Mr. Speaker, the Coalition is sponsoring "An Evening of Conscience" Dinner in Jerusalem. I would like to take this opportunity to wish the Coalition great success at this upcoming event and recognize the leadership and staff of the Coalition for the remarkable work that has been done by Coalition Chairman Daniel Eisen, and the Coalition staff members: Brigitte Silverberg, Reya Eisen, Daniel Ehrlich, Daniel Grisarou, Gittel Davis, Gedalya Gower, and the Coalition's Washington representatives Alyza D. Lewin and Vicki Iseman.

Mr. Speaker, it is my sincere hope that Zachary Baumel, Tzvi Feldman, Yehuda Katz, and Ron Arad will soon be home with their families and that the dedicated staff of the Coalition will be able to find other uses for their many talents.

HONORING THE GRAND TRAVERSE
BAND OF OTTAWA AND CHIP-
PEWA INDIANS

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2000

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, as a lifelong Michigan resident, and as Co-Chair of the House Congressional Native American Caucus, it gives me great pleasure to stand before you today to speak on the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. On May 27, the Band will celebrate 20 years of reaffirmed federal recognition.

The Grand Traverse Band has a rich and long history. The Tribe entered into treaties with the United States in 1836 and 1855. These treaties specified land for the Band, but a misinterpretation caused the Band's recognition to be terminated, and it was left without federal assistance. Determined to rectify this error, the Tribe applied for federal recognition under the Indian Reorganization Act in 1934, and was denied by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. It tried again, unsuccessfully in 1943. Such disappointment would have deterred many people, but the members of the Grand Traverse Band were steadfast, and tried once again in 1978, and on May 27, 1980, the Tribe's federal recognition was finally reaffirmed.

In these twenty years, the Grand Traverse Band has served as a strong example of tribal self-determination. It has developed a strong socioeconomic system. It established a solid infrastructure, and provides many governmental services to its members. The Tribe is the county's largest employer and is among the largest employers within a six-county area. Northwest Michigan is a better place because of the Grand Traverse Band.

Last year, the Tribe was honored by Harvard University for providing an outstanding example of tribal governance. The Harvard Project on American Indian and Economic Development noted the Tribe's innovation in crafting a formula for distributing its share of the Michigan Indian Land Claim Settlement Award. I would also like to acknowledge George Bennett, Chairman of the Tribe, and my friend of more than 30 years, for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians have enriched many lives with its history and heritage. I consider myself a better person for working alongside the Tribe on many issues and concerns. After a long fight to achieve federal recognition, the Band has much to celebrate with this milestone. I ask my colleagues in the 106th Congress to please join me in congratulating the Grand Traverse Band on 20 years of reaffirmed recognition of their retained sovereignty, and wishing it continued success.

TRIBUTE TO THE HON. DENNIS
GILLETTE

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2000

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I pay tribute to Dennis Gillette, who is retiring next month

as Executive Assistant to the President for Special Projects at California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, CA.

It is his second retirement from his second successful career. In his spare time he has managed to hold elective office—he is currently Mayor of the City of Thousand Oaks—and support so many non-profit organizations that it would be impossible to list them all. He also holds a California Teaching Credential and has taught at numerous academies, universities and colleges.

Dennis began his CLU career in 1988, coming on board as Vice President for University Development. He also served as Vice President for Administrative Services/Treasurer prior to his current position. In this post, he is responsible for overseeing several major construction and design projects.

His first career was with the Ventura County Sheriff's Department, where he rose to the rank of Assistant Sheriff. During his 25 years of the Department, he also served on the original Thousand Oaks Police Department and was Chief of Police for the cities of Camarillo and Thousand Oaks.

Not surprisingly, Dennis Gillette has been awarded numerous honors over the years, including being named "Man of the Year" by the Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce in 1987, and the Conejo Valley Historical Society's "Don Triunfo" in 1992. He has received commendations from Optimist International and the Optimist clubs in Thousand Oaks and Camarillo. The cities of Thousand Oaks, Camarillo, Simi Valley, Moorpark, and Ventura have honored his commitment to community.

Dennis' wife, Terry, is an English teacher for the Conejo Valley Unified School District. They have two daughters, Kristine and Lisa. In 1983, the Gillettes were named the Conejo Valley Family of the Year.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues will join me in wishing Dennis and his family the best on the occasion and his second retirement, and Godspeed for whatever new endeavors he may decide to undertake.

HONORING PARKCHESTER CHORUS

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2000

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, today we have something to sing about: The Parkchester Chorus is celebrating its 60th Anniversary. This wonderful group performed its first spring concert in 1940. It was founded by residents of the Parkchester housing complex and is the oldest choral group in the Bronx. Over the years the group has expanded from out of the Parkchester community and now draws its members from as far as New Jersey and Connecticut. But it still reflects its roots in the Bronx as a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, non-sectarian choral group.

The Parkchester Chorus is a vital part of the cultural life of the Bronx. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Chorus and its members for their valuable contributions to our lives and their gift of music to our parents, to us and to future generations. I offer them three musical cheers.